

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 M-02 A-01 OPR-02 SIL-01 LAB-06 SCCT-02 IO-14

EB-11 COME-00 DRC-01 /134 W
----- 093447

R 161220Z AUG 74

FM AMCONSUL DURBAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1785

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

UNCLAS DURBAN 0298

CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SF

SUBJ: AFRICAN STRIKE AT FRAME GROUP TEXTILE FACTORIES

1. SOME 1500 AFRICAN WORKERS WENT ON STRIKE AUGUST 12 AT CONSOLIDATED FINE SPINNERS AND WEAVERS AND ULTEX TEXTILE FACTORIES OWNED BY FRAME GROUP. THEY DEMANDED TEN RAND ACROSS BOARD WAGE INCREASES ON WEEKLY SALARIES, WHICH AT PRESENT ARE MINIMUM R14.05 FOR MEN AND R10.50 FOR WOMEN. COMPANY IMMEDIATELY THREATENED ALL STRIKERS WOULD BE FIRED WITH LOSS OF LEAVE AND LONGEVITY PAY UNLESS THEY RETURNED WORK BY AUGUST 14, BUT AT END OF WEEK STRIKERS WERE STILL OUT.

2. STRIKERS ASKED THAT KWAZULU URBAN REPRESENTATIVE, MR. SOLOMON NGOBESE, BE BROUGHT IN TO NEGOTIATE FOR THEM, BUT DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND COMPANY REFUSED. LATER NATIONAL UNION OF TEXTILE WORKERS OFFERED NEGOTIATE ON STRIKERS' BEHALF BUT THIS ALSO REJECTED BY COMPANY.

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3. FINALLY, FOURTEEN-MAN DELEGATION OF STRIKERS, WITH

MR. NGOBESE LEFT OUTSIDE, MET WITH COMPANY MANAGEMENT. THEY WERE TOLD NONE OF THEIR DEMANDS WOULD BE MET AND THEY COULD NOT CHOOSE THEIR OWN FORM OF REPRESENTATION.

4. DURING STRIKE TRUCKLOADS OF POLICE HAVE STOOD BY, BUT THERE HAVE BEEN NO INCIDENTS. DURING MEETING OF 500 STRIKERS AT BOLTON HALL SECURITY POLICE WERE PRESENT AND REFUSED TO LEAVE.

5. COMMENT: FRAME GROUP IS NOTED FOR ITS HARD LINE. IT WAS STRIKES AT FRAME GROUP PLANTS IN EARLY 1973 THAT HELPED SPARK NATAL'S MASSIVE LABOR DISTURBANCES. WHILE THIS STRIKE HAS NOT REACHED SUCH PROPORTIONS, IT COULD BE PROLONGED, ALTHOUGH AT WEEK'S END THE FACTORIES WERE REPORTEDLY HIRING NEW WORKERS TO BREAK STRIKE.
HOLMES

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Message Attributes

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30 JUN 2005

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